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Commonweal

FALL EDUCATION ISSUE

Catholic Intellectual Life

The New Debate

Andrew M. Greeley
John D. Donovan
James W. Trent

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

The Jewish Statement

JOSEPH Cardinal Ritter has expressed his confidence that the Vatican Council will approve a statement on anti-Semitism that will be acceptable to the Jewish community. This can only mean that the Cardinal believes the Council Fathers will restore the original language of Cardinal Bea's draft schema, which stated clearly that the Jews are not an accursed race and cannot be held collectively guilty for the death of Christ. Nothing less will be acceptable to the Jewish community, nor should it be.

The watered-down version now before the Council, leaked to the press a month ago, confirms the worst fears about the statement. The language is vague and circumspect; the key question of deicide and special Jewish guilt is glossed over in the crudest manner. Catholics are merely asked "not to present the Jewish people as an accursed nation," not to say or do anything "which may alienate the minds of men from the Jews," and "not to impute to the Jews of our time that which was perpetrated in the Passion of Christ."

The translation used here is unofficial, but in all of the published versions, it is clear that the draft can be interpreted in many ways. One way would be to conclude that although the Jews *are* an accursed nation whose forebears are guilty of deicide, Catholics should refrain from saying so, either out of kindness or personal interest.

The personal interest theme has not escaped the attention of Jewish leaders. The injunction not to say or do anything "which may alienate the minds of men from the Jews" can be interpreted as a reminder that anti-Semitic statements and actions make proselytizing more difficult. The New York *Times* was so certain that this was the case that its translation ran like this: "do not say or do other things which could drive away [from eventual union with Christians] the hearts of the Jews." The bracketed material merely resolved—in a way the *Times* was particularly bitter about—one of the ambiguities that pervade the draft.

The Church, of course, would not be honest if it pretended to deny its message should be carried to all men, but the note of proselytism is an unseemly one in a statement intended merely to provide a firm foundation for uprooting Catholic anti-Semitism. Instead of stressing institutional interest, the statement might have stopped with a call for justice and a defense of the integrity of the Jewish tradition.

JEWISH leaders and organizations were bound to be dismayed by the needless skirting of the deicide issue, but the heavy stress on conversion seems to have offended them even more. Rabbis in the New York area have protested bitterly on this score. According to Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum of the American Jewish Committee, a "passing and relatively inoffensive" reference to the Church's hope for Jewish conversions has been expanded in the new draft into "a major thesis, phrased in emotionally charged language, and can only be seen by most Jews as an appeal for aggressive proselytization."

Other sections of the draft are as offensive to Jews as they should be to understanding Catholics. One such section says that as the Church "severely rejects crimes committed wherever against men, so also it deplores and condemns hatred and persecutions of the Jews"—a peculiar way of backing into the subject at hand (the Church disapproves crimes against men, Jews are men, therefore the Church disapproves—reluctantly?—crimes against Jews).

Justice certainly demands more than this, and as a practical matter, no headway toward the uprooting of Catholic anti-Semitism can be made by such a careful, half-hearted statement. A recent poll of Catholics by the Anti-Defamation League shows that 61 percent think the Jews are specially re-

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sponsible for the death of Christ, and 46 percent either agree with or are uncertain about the statement that "the Jews can never be forgiven for what they did to Jesus until they accept him as the true Saviour." To agree with, or even be puzzled about, the second statement, it is necessary to rearrange historical facts, assume collective guilt, and ignore Christ's statement: "Father, forgive them (whoever the killers were) for they know not what they do."

Modern scholarship has even deprived anti-Semites of the claim that those who killed Christ were Jews. Christ was arrested by Romans, tried by a Roman court on political charges, and executed by Romans in the Roman manner, crucifixion. Professor Paul Winter says in his book, *On the Trial of Jesus*, that the appearance of Christ before the Jewish high-priest was a pro-forma preliminary hearing, not a trial, which would have had to be before a plenary session of the Sanhedrin. The Romans used local officials, Jews, because of their knowledge of local conditions and language, to carry out preliminary inquiries before Roman trials. The history of early Christianity, Prof. Winter says, now appears to show a semi-conscious effort to swing the focus of guilt from the Romans to the Jews, both because of the Christian-Jewish competition for adherents, and the Christians' need to avoid antagonizing the Roman state.

The Jewish blood that has flowed for twenty centuries because of this tragic turn in Christian history is incalculable. No satisfactory amends can be made for it. But if we are serious about erasing Christian anti-Semitism, we cannot settle for the mild form of lip-service now before the Council. The needs of diplomacy and the political sensitivities of the Arab governments must not be granted the sort of weight that brings a parliamentary compromise. In one sense, the history of Christian anti-Semitism is a history of expediency winning out over principle. Even now, when anti-Semitism itself is being confronted, the danger is that expediency will win out again.

Church Burning

A WEEK IN Mississippi is simply not a week until at least one more Negro church is set ablaze. Twenty-four have been burnt in recent months. The tiny newspaper accounts buried on the inside pages have by now taken on the repetitive character of a sportscaster announcing balls and strikes: the F.B.I. has been notified, the County Sheriff says he is investigating. News accounts of arrests and successful convictions are not found even on the inside pages.

After the burning of the twenty-fourth church, a group of Mississippi church leaders, from nine denominations, formed a "Committee of Concern" to raise money for rebuilding; this news is heartening. But it does not modify the central lesson of the burnings: the Mississippi Negro's complete lack of any political voice and/or muscle, and hence his dependence on "outsiders" and "spectacular" demonstrations which pressure the federal government to intervene.

Compare the Mississippi Negro's situation to that of, say, the Roman Catholic or Jew in New York State. Were twenty-four New York Catholic churches—or twenty-four synagogues—to be set afire within a period of months, the reaction would be overwhelming. Journals, religious and secular, would summon up scenes of the Spanish Civil War, Russian repression, and Nazi outrage. The pressure on state and national politicians would be almost unbearable. The machinery of law and order would whir with an efficiency that spoke of new oil and alerted custodians. Protest, not abandoned to the young and critical, would become the standard posture of the accepted community leaders. Finally, the places of worship safeguarded and arsonists apprehended, the land would be covered by a host of conferences designed to reweave the torn fabric of human relations. Neither public officials nor private groups would stint in spending money; by-laws and normal procedures would be willingly strained to take care of the emergency.

Such speculation is only superficially playful. Behind it lies the realization of the tragic difference between our verbal support of the protection of others and the *real* pressure on the power-structure which we wield to protect ourselves. There is much the federal government and private groups could do in Mississippi and in similar Southern precincts—massive efforts at voter registration and literacy programs being two examples beyond the minimum of preventing murders and church burnings. But genuine support from the rest of the nation, a prerequisite for this "outside" intervention, first awaits the recognition that without it neither the Mississippi Negro nor his churches have a chance.

Mutual Deterrence

THE RECESSING of the Geneva disarmament conference until February presents two contrasts. The first involves President Johnson's message of confidence and encouragement to the conference and Semyon K. Tsarapkin's parting blast which blames the United States for the "gloomy and depressing" lack of accomplishment this session. The

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second is the striking difference between the familiar stalemate at Geneva and the various weapons developments which have been so much in the news recently.

Premier Khrushchev's announcement in Japan of what was first reported to be Russia's possession of the ultimate weapon of universal destruction understandably made the biggest headlines. His subsequent statement that he was describing only another "terrible" weapon he had been shown before setting out on his journey offers mankind little consolation. The Soviet leader simply provided the world with a dramatic reminder of the continuing balance of terror that still confronts both East and West.

After Mr. Johnson had assured the American electorate about the precautions against accidental setting off of any of our thermonuclear weapons—and the security which intricate codes and electronic devices embody—he revealed two advances for the national defenses. The first achievement of which he spoke (apparently in answer to charges of his rival for the Presidency) is capability to intercept and destroy war-headed enemy space satellites. This was immediately amplified and confirmed by Secretary McNamara. The second, through new radar devices, materially extends the present 15-minute warning time of an impending intercontinental missile attack. The new method, by following the curve of the earth, reaches out beyond the former horizon limit of radar detection.

Neither of these achievements would appear to be sweeping enough to change the basic fact that enough bombers and missiles could still get through to both the Soviet Union and the United States to cause unparalleled devastation. Moreover, the Johnson announcement hardly signalizes a decision to go all out for an effective anti-missile system that at stupendous cost would spell overwhelming American superiority—a decision which certain atomic scientists fear would mean a new and accelerating round in the arms race. Yet it must be remembered that at any rate the NATO powers continue to go ahead with their plans for a mixed-manned fleet armed with Polaris thermonuclear weapons.

The cause of disarmament badly needs some tangible achievement at this juncture. One of the best would be a firm agreement of this country and the Soviet Union to begin the destruction of specified numbers of bombers and weapons. While in general sticking to its demand for general and complete disarmament, Russia did offer certain modifications on this formula two years ago. The United States has yet to match this gesture through certain changes in its own more reasonable and responsible disarmament proposal.

The Place of Mary

THE LATE Carl Jung once speculated that Catholic devotion to the Blessed Virgin reveals an unconscious desire to turn the Trinity into a quaternity. What Catholics wanted, he felt, was a better representation of the feminine principle in the Godhead. Jung's theory was odd, but only one of a long line of attempts by non-Catholics to understand the seemingly excessive emphasis in the Church on Our Lady. Others have suggested that the real explanation lies in the patriarchal nature of Mediterranean society: a warm, nurturing mother is needed to intervene with a harsh, distant father. Protestants, on the whole, have never felt the need for such exotic psychological and sociological theories. It has been enough for them that veneration of Mary, in their eyes, has little scriptural warrant. Along with the doctrine of papal infallibility, Marian devotions have seemed to most Protestants the ultimate aberration of a community which places the Church before both Christ and the Bible.

There can be little doubt that these speculations and criticisms are in the back of the minds of those Council Fathers intent on keeping Marian devotion and doctrine in a proper Christological context. "The desired renovation," Cardinal Léger said, "consists in using accurate words and precise and sober formulas to express Mary's role." As did Cardinal Bea, Cardinal Léger questioned the use of the title "Mediatrix," pointing especially to the difficulties of interpretation which it carries with it in the light of St. Paul's letter to Timothy in which Christ is described as "the one mediator between God and man." (1 Tim. 2: 5) For his part, Cardinal Bea said that "It is insufficient to give a general warning against abuses in devotion to the Virgin Mary without giving specific examples. The chapter should avoid the use of the term 'Mediatrix' because, apart from creating difficulties for many Catholics, it also presents very serious difficulties for our separated brethren."

Just how this debate will end is not clear at the moment. Let it only be said here the problem is, for Catholics themselves, an important one. Wholly apart from the ecumenical implications, the place accorded the Virgin Mary in the economy of salvation is crucial for the worship and theology of the Church. The admitted excesses of Marian devotion of the past few centuries reflected theological and liturgical weaknesses. Karl Rahner and Yves Congar have suggested that the excesses reflected a crypto-monophysitism in the Church: Christ's divinity was stressed to the exclusion of his humanity, leading many to believe that He could be approached only through His mother.

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Moreover, one might guess, the relative ignorance among Catholics of Holy Scripture undoubtedly helped to encourage the flights of subjective fancy which have surrounded much popular Marian devotion. No one who reads Scripture carefully could fail to observe that it is Mary's faith and fidelity, her total acceptance of God's will, which shines through most forcefully. Nor could one help noting that, in the vast majority of cases, men approached Christ directly and not through His mother. The scriptural Mary bears only the scantest relationship to the devotional Mary. Finally, it might be plausible to think that the absence of a vernacular liturgy had much to do with the proliferation of Marian devotions. Whatever their defects, they did at least have the advantage of being understandable.

Recent developments in the Church have done much to reduce these dangers. Christological speculation has emphasized the importance of Christ's humanity. Scriptural studies have provided a better perspective on Mary's relationship to Christ and to the Church. The liturgical renewal has centered on a proper understanding of the Mass as the core of Christian worship, on the vernacular as a crucial means of insuring comprehension of the sacred rites, and on the concept of the worshipping community as a counterbalance to an individualistic piety. The decision of the Fathers during the second session to include a discussion of the Virgin as a part of a more general discussion of the Church, rather than as a separate schema, was a signal of the Church's desire to restore a balanced devotion to Mary in the Church.

Though he was speaking in an entirely different context, a complaint of Archbishop Ignace Ziade, Maronite Archbishop of Beirut, has pertinence here as well. "Latin ecclesiology," he said in commenting on chapter seven of *De Ecclesia*, "has evolved in a Christological dimension only, but is still adolescent in the dimension that regards the Holy Spirit." When one considers the vast amount of Mariological research and speculation over the past centuries, the Church's neglect of the Holy Spirit stands out with a vivid starkness. Just as an overemphasis on Mary has sometimes weakened the Catholic's understanding of Christ, so too a dwelling on Christ and His Mother may have helped lead to a neglect of the Holy Spirit. The title of Mary as "Queen of Heaven," for instance, leaves obscure the place of the Holy Spirit, if not seeming to make His place altogether irrelevant.

Mary as a sign of God's mercy and of Christ's victory is magnificent. Mary as a figure of all those who believe is worthy of emulation. Mary as a type of the Church is a glorious symbol. As the Constitution on the Liturgy puts it: "In her the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the Redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be." Is it necessary to say more than this? Why should titles be proliferated, to the confusion of both Catholics and non-Catholics?

WASHINGTON REPORT

Goldwater for Therapy

ONE'S attitude toward the Goldwater campaign depends upon whether one takes the political, psychiatric, or philosophical viewpoint.

For years, many observers have argued that although they personally did not share the hard-shell, right-wing Republican Party position, they believed it would be a good experience for these conservatives and for the country if the Republicans gave their nomination to a right-wing candidate. It would be therapeutic, it was argued, if conservatives ran a nationwide campaign according to their own pet theories and prejudices, were overwhelming defeated, and thereby "got it out of their system"—at no cost to the country. The Goldwater forces capitalized on this sentiment with their pre-convention slogan, "A choice and not an echo."

There is some merit in this psychiatric viewpoint. It probably is a bad condition for a nation's politics if a sizeable number of persons are consistently blocked from expressing and acting out their opinions through the normal political institutions. There is a limit to how much alienation and sub-surface disgruntlement we want to permit in our political life. Much better, for example, that money and energies be used up openly in behalf of the Goldwater-Miller ticket than diverted to the John Birch Society and other semi-secret underground organizations.

When the possibility of the Republican Party nominating a hard-shell conservative used to be considered, one usually thought of the thrice-thwarted candidacy of the late Robert A. Taft or, lacking a man of his considerable personal distinction, the choice of an orthodox party wheelhorse from the Middle West such as Representative Charles Halleck or ex-Senator John Bricker. No one until recently foresaw the possibility that one of the two major parties would name anyone as idiosyncratic and highly ideologized as Barry Goldwater. His

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political style is quite different from that of Taft, who had such a deep interest in all the practical details of legislation and from the Dirksens and Hallecks for whom compromise and accommodation are political second nature.

Now that the test of this psychiatric approach to politics is actually being made, those who used to hold it as a speculative idea are as uneasy as everyone else about the possibility that Goldwater might actually win. Any candidate nominated by a major party has, after all, a sporting chance of victory since a huge electorate is, notwithstanding the pollsters, ultimately unpredictable. If Goldwater were to win, one faction's therapy would become the nation's misfortune.

For those who look at the Goldwater campaign as largely an exercise in relieving minority frustrations, the worse and more outrageous the speeches which Goldwater and his running mate, Representative William Miller, deliver, so much the better. Why leave any reactionary, eccentric, or old-fashioned idea unexpressed? But for those who view politics from a philosophic viewpoint, the campaigns of both Goldwater and President Johnson are sad, dismaying affairs. The President is on to a large truth when he stresses national unity. Obviously, there is a sense in which we as a people have a unity that transcends all partisan differences. A diverse, continent-wide society has to cherish its unity and has to cultivate and esteem the political arts that help hold it together. But Mr. Johnson, although a skilled practitioner of the politics of unity, sets forth this ideal in unctuous and oversimplified rhetoric. The line between his active, striving, compassionate but unified and harmonious "Great Society" and the profits-first, business-as-usual complacency of the Eisenhower era may be thinner than he realizes or than his speeches take into account.

SENATOR Goldwater's treatment of the classic conservative positions on fundamental issues, however, is much more poignant. The United States, of course, does not provide the proper historical background for conservatism because this country has never known feudalism, monarchy, and an hereditary land-owning class out of which modern European conservatism of the Burke and Disraeli variety evolved. We are predominantly an innovating, anti-traditionalist society. Nevertheless, conservatism still has something of value and of relevance to say to us. It expresses a sound pessimism about the perfectibility of man, reminds us that there are limits to what politics can accomplish, and underscores the importance of individual moral responsibility even in the age of the welfare state. Moreover, liberalism has become an establishment, politically and intellectually. Like all establishments, it could do with some searching criticism and dissent from conservatives as well as from radicals. The liberal hegemony in our national politics over the past thirty-two years (for the eight years of Eisenhower represented only a partial, half-hearted rejection of liberal values) has carried the nation both in foreign and in domestic affairs beyond some points of no return. But not all of our history is irreversible and not all of our policy options have been foreclosed. A conservative presidential candidate who understood the sources and implications of his own ideas and could argue for them with wit and force would make a great contribution to our political dialogue.

Senator Goldwater would like to be that ideal candidate. He is certainly not afraid to take unpopular and politically risky positions, and that is one of the prerequisites. But he simply lacks the intellectual power and clarity of mind to argue the conservative case on a serious level. On foreign policy, he approaches complicated issues in a cavalier manner that suggests he does not take his own opinions with entire seriousness and does not really believe he will ever have to be responsible for putting them into effect. He makes bold suggestions such as severing diplomatic relations with Russia or dropping disarmament negotiations or getting rid of Castro without exploring the consequences or relating them one to another.

On domestic issues, he stresses rugged individualism to such an extent that it seems as if men had no obligations to society at all except military service and contributing to the Red Cross. Not even the pioneers of the old West were that individualistic. And on grave racial problems, Goldwater turns a blind eye toward the injustices and deprivations suffered by the Negroes while he welcomes fanatical white supremacists such as Senator Strom Thurmond and ex-Governor Ross Barnett to his camp. No conservative with a conscience could dispose of the most pressing domestic issue of the day with so little anguish and such ironclad incomprehension.

The Goldwater campaign is most serious when viewed strictly as a political phenomenon. Although it is intellectually a failure and may or may not prove therapeutic, it is unquestionably a political reality. For the first time, the men of the radical right have gained full power in a national party. Under the chairmanship of Dean Burch, they have entrenched themselves at the Republican National Committee. Even though their candidate is disastrously defeated, they will not be easy to dislodge either in Washington or in the many state headquarters they have taken over across the country. They are gaining invaluable experience in running a national operation and have developed organizational contacts and sources of funds that were not previously available to them. The Rockefeller-Scranton-Romney moderates are going to be busy for a long time trying to recoup their defeat at the San Francisco convention.

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

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Baiting the Layman

FATHER William J. Smith, S.J., writes a regular column for the diocesan press, and week in and week out I agree with it far more often than I disagree. One I take strenuous exception to, however, was a recent column headed "Bishop-Baiting Isn't Lay Action."

"Some of the intellectuals among the laity," Father Smith opens up, "seem to be laboring under the delusion that the renewal and the reform of the Church promised by the Vatican Council will come about more quickly through criticism of the hierarchy by the laity." Well, if this is delusion, I plead guilty. Criticism can be overdone, of course; no one would deny that. Granted, criticism of any sort should be just, it should be prudent, it should not be contumacious. But with all that said, criticism still has a large part to play in reform and renewal—even criticism of the hierarchy.

One of the tragedies of the era that is passing is that in it people thought of the Church as simply the Bishops and the priests. This kind of thinking will not do. As Pope Pius said, we *are* the Church, and this includes all of us, people as well as priests. By virtue of Baptism and Confirmation we are consecrated, set apart; we have a Christian vocation. And as Father Karl Rahner noted in *Free Speech in the Church*, speaking up can be more than a privilege; it is often a positive duty. Lay people as well as priests and Bishops, Father Rahner says, must feel a sense of responsibility for the official actions of the Church. I see no way this can be done if one automatically excludes from such lay concern the actions and decisions of our Bishops.

Take the specific item that provoked Father Smith, what he describes as "an extreme point of view, publicly expressed by a layman: 'I don't see how the Bishops will even communicate their own sense of urgency about renewal,' runs the remark, 'until they drop, or alter significantly, their current garb, forms of address and other relics of a wholly different age. Somehow, in their very person, they must symbolize openness and a full dedication to the contemporary needs of mankind. This simply cannot be done effectively in a medieval costume. Yet, somehow, whenever this is suggested, and many have done so recently, many Bishops seem to take offense. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why, unless they feel that their authority rests on the present symbols. But surely it does not. It rests on their consecration and on their mandate, not on what they wear.'"

I didn't write the statement Father Smith quotes; Daniel Callahan did. But I certainly have written something very like it, and I cannot see what is wrong with the remark. Agree or disagree, but why should such a comment make any Bishop—or Father Smith, for that matter—angry? If this is what a layman thinks, why shouldn't he say so?

The reasoning of those who feel as I do is simple. It is not, as Father Smith suggests, a matter of anti-clericalism. Rather, our position is prompted by love of the Church and by a desire to make her work more effective in the modern world. It is based on the conviction that ring-kissing, episcopal coats of arms, having "palaces" instead of homes and all the other episcopal customs that date back to the age of the nobility are a positive hindrance to what every Bishop in fact wants to accomplish.

For many in our age the Church seems an anachronism. In the Ecumenical Council and elsewhere we seek an *aggiornamento*, a bringing up to date. Are we to say now that suggestions along these lines can be made about everything except a Bishop's dress and the customs that surround his office?

As far as Catholics themselves are concerned, I don't believe that they need the relics of a feudal past to inspire respect for the office of Bishop. This respect already exists, and it is soundly based on an understanding of the Bishop's role as a successor of the Apostles. But the question is, what are the effects of such customs and ceremonials on those outside the Church? For my part, I believe such trappings only raise a wall between the Bishop and those he most wants to reach.

We live at a time when the fear of authoritarianism keeps many away from the Church, and in our day and age customs that would have seemed normal in an age of kings antagonize and repel—I am thinking here in particular of ring-kissing, which is widely misunderstood outside of the Church. The fact is, I think, that many of these customs go back to days when Bishops were lords temporal as well as spiritual; they make little sense today, and I suspect most Bishops would heave a mighty sigh of relief if they could get rid of them.

Like many who resent comments along these lines, Father Smith tries to push the idea to an absurd conclusion. What, he asks rhetorically, would the critics have a Bishop wear—the uniform of a space pilot, perhaps? But this is childish. There would be no trouble about designing episcopal garb for every occasion that would combine dignity and modernity—indeed, what is required is to a large extent only a simplification and elimination of peripheral trappings and customs that are outmoded. The point is this: the Church is not an anachronism; she *is* as relevant for our time as she was in the middle ages. As much as possible, we should bear witness to this fact, not obscure it. JAMES O'GARA

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Every debate has a history, but the course of some is more checkered than others. A case in point was the debate stimulated by Monsignor John Tracy Ellis' famous essay on "American Catholics and the Intellectual Life" in 1955. That essay stimulated a flood of books and articles, some supporting Monsignor Ellis' indictment of American Catholic intellectual life, others denying it. By the end of the fifties debate had waned and, primarily because of Pope John and the Second Vatican Council, public attention turned to other matters.

Within the past two years, however, the debate has taken on a new life, in great part because of the work of a number of Catholic sociologists giving renewed attention to the problem. One of the most prominent of these is Father Andrew M. Greeley of the Public Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. In Religion and Career *he argued that recent statistics present a more optimistic picture than has been commonly thought the case.*

Other sociologists have been less sanguine. Among these are Professor John D. Donovan of Boston College, author of The Academic Man in the Catholic College, *an important study of Catholic college faculty members. Another is Dr. James W. Trent of the Center for Higher Education at the University of California. In his 1964 doctoral dissertation, "The Etiology of Catholic Intellectualism," Dr. Trent found a continuing pattern of Catholic anti-intellectualism and took particular exception to the conclusions of Father Greeley.*

We have asked Father Greeley, Professor Donovan and Dr. Trent to discuss the issues. We would call to the reader's attention the fact that none of the three authors saw the essays of the others in preparing his own essay. In particular, Professor Donovan's comments about the conclusions of Father Greeley pertain to Father Greeley's earlier work and not to his essay published here.

There are, of course, many problems now exercising the minds of Catholics. Nonetheless, we believe that the question of Catholic intellectualism to be one of continuing importance and worthy of renewed attention. THE EDITORS

The New Debate—I

Entering the Mainstream

ANDREW M. GREELEY

A COUPLE of years ago two non-Catholic colleagues and I ventured forth to speak at a Catholic education meeting. We brought what we thought was good news: Catholic college graduates were now just as likely to go to graduate school as anyone else; on a vast variety of indicators there were no signs that young Catholics were less intellectual than other graduates. The reaction from the floor of the meeting was violent. It was perfectly clear to our listeners that their colleges had to be inferior; the very thought they were average was quite intolerable. Finally, one questioner exploded, "You people just don't know all the anti-intellectual deans that we have to put up with." My colleague, Peter Rossi, leaned over and whispered in my ear, "What the hell makes him think he has a monopoly on anti-intellectual deans?"

Such a comment provides as good a text as any for this article. I will contend that American Catholics have now pulled abreast of the rest of the population economically and socially and are in the process of doing so intellectually. While this is an accomplishment of considerable importance, it does not mean that Catholic intellectualism has become distinguished; it most assuredly has not. It has become average. The intellectual life of American Catholics is at this point no worse and no better than that of most other Americans. We do not have any more anti-intellectual deans than do other average colleges, but neither do we have any less.

The first question we must ask is why the intellectualism of American Catholics lagged so far behind the rest of the country. I would not want to disagree with the analysis of Professor O'Dea which explained much of the lag in terms of the cultural values and social organization of American Catholicism. There can be no question that for a long period of time intellectual pursuits were not thought to be very important, and indeed in some circles were considered dangerous. However, it seems to me that a prior question must be asked: Why did the American Church—clergy and laity—adopt an organizational system and a set of values which underemphasized the intellectual life?

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Perhaps the post-tridentine climate of the whole Church had something to do with it. However, my own hunch is that a much more prosaic explanation will cover a good part of the problem. American Catholics were too poor and too new in the country to be concerned with much more than economic survival and the Church was too fearful of the destruction of the faith of the immigrants to worry about the intellectual life. It is unfortunate, perhaps, but, with rare exceptions, intellectualism is a luxury that is sacrificed in times of life and death struggle.

It must be remembered that even now half the Catholic adults in the country are immigrants or the children of immigrants. We are but a generation or two away from the peasant farms of Europe. With this kind of cultural and social base the situation of the 1930's and 1940's as so ably summarized by Msgr. Ellis was deplorable but hardly surprising. Indeed, anything different would have been almost miraculous. One does not, in most instances, become an intellectual unless one goes to college; nor does a group produce eminent scholars or scientists unless it has a substantial proportion of its members who have received higher education. A college education was something quite beyond the imaginative powers of most of the immigrants and was in any case economically unfeasible. The development of a Catholic intellectual life in this country had to await the preparation of an adequate social and economic base and such a base did not really come into existence until the late 1940's.

THERE IS an immediate response to the analysis contained in the preceding paragraph. It can be summed up in the question, "What about the Jews? They came at the same time as the Catholics and almost immediately achieved intellectual eminence in America—if they could have done so, why did not Catholics do the same thing?" I often wonder when I hear this argument if the one propounding it really means it to be taken seriously or is just trying to score debating points. The social and historical backgrounds of the two groups are so different that I find it hard to see how anyone could expect the comparison to have much validity. For a thousand years and more the Jews had been either city dwellers or commercial men; they had to live by their wit and intelligence and economic striving or they would not live at all. Their adjustment to the New World was bound to be much different than that of peasant farmers who were still but a step away from feudalism. If one is to make a fair comparison of the intellectual achievements of the migrants from the fields of Ireland, Italy, and Poland, one should rather match them with, let us say, Missouri Synod Germans or Norwegian Lutherans.

One Catholic writer has argued that Catholic intellectualism has been less impressive than the immigrant state of the Church would justify. Such a contention is difficult to prove or disprove and is actually more of an ideological assumption than anything else. However, one can submit it to an indirect test by reasoning that if it were true, Catholic intellectual life would not achieve parity as the economic base of American Catholics became firm. It seems to me, however, that the available evidence is all to the contrary. One-fifth of the 1961 college graduates who are seeking a Ph.D. in the top twelve universities of the country are church-going Catholics. They are just as likely to have an A average, just as likely to profess intellectual values, just as likely to plan careers in academic research. They may not live up to their plans, of course; none of them may achieve excellence or eminence. But there is no evidence that they will not and those who claim—I almost wrote eagerly expect—that they will fall short of the goal do so for ideological reasons—or perhaps merely because they remember all those anti-intellectual deans. However, if I may step back a moment from the statistical and speak of the young Catholics I have known in the sociology department at the University of Chicago, I have not the slightest doubt that in the not too distant future some of them will have senior faculty positions at the top colleges of the country. Indeed, we may well see the day when the church-going Catholic will be as common in the upper reaches of Academia as the agnostic Jew (and the two, by the way, will get along famously).

I realize that it is often said that these young intellectuals are going to leave the Church. I just cannot see this happening in great numbers; our statistics do not show it and I have not been able to observe much indication of massive apostasy among the ones I know. Intellectuals are by their nature restless and critical people; there are many aspects of American Catholicism that they find unappealing and many places where they are unwelcome. The Church has a long way to go before it adjusts to a situation where it has a large and critical lay intelligentsia. Indeed, what often surprises me is that the very young intellectuals are as patient as they are. The ones I know seem to have much more theological and historical sophistication than did their immediate predecessors. They realize that the human element in the Church is far from perfect and it is not going to become perfect over night; but this does not cause them much trouble. They don't like the way authority is being used but they don't confuse the use of authority with the Chuch. I will not deny that some of these future scholars are leaving the Church, though I get the impression frequently that their problems are personality problems rather than theological; they somehow or other have confused the Church with their parents and they hate their parents. I am told that there are others who are giving the Church one last chance: if it measures up to their stan-

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dards on the race issue, they will stay; it it does not, they will leave. Should such be their stand, then of course they will leave. If they are so uninformed historically and theologically as to put the human element in the Church to this kind of test, it will surely fail. If we can keep people in the Church only by having all churchmen live up to the ideals of the Church, then surely they will leave; they would have left the Church of the Apostles, too.

My argument, then, is that there is developing a younger Catholic intelligentsia, loyal to the Church in its own way, and not very different from the non-Catholic intelligentsia—save in its going to Church. I further contend that the emergence of this group results mainly from the social and economic progress of the Catholic population—especially in the last quarter century. The following table (and I should be excused for introducing it) indicates the nature of the change within the Church in thirty years:

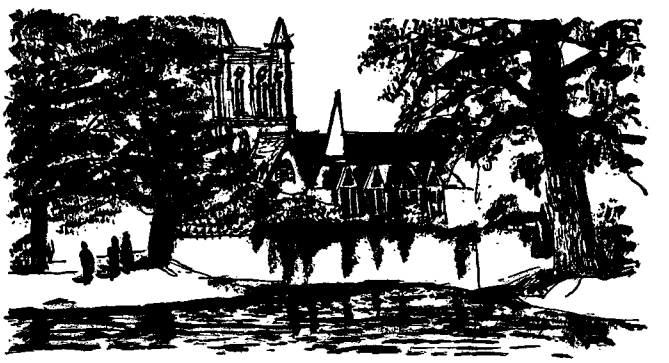
	Age: Under 30		Age 50-60	
Characteristics	Cath.	Prot.	Cath.	Prot.
Per cent attending college	28	29	12	25
Per cent upper or upper middle class	29	28	18	30
Per cent earning more than $8,000	25	29	29	40

Thus Catholics under 30 are very little different from Protestants (from the same geographic regions, by the way) economically and socially, even though their parents are quite different from Protestants of the same age. It is more difficult to indicate the precise time of the change in intellectual climate. However, my colleague, Seymour Warkov, working with Census Bureau material, found that within occupational groupings parochial school graduates lagged behind other Americans in obtaining undergraduate and graduate degrees until the late 1950's when they rather suddenly jumped *ahead*. The Big Change in Catholic intellectual climate apparently happened toward the end of the ten year period which began with the G. I. Bill and ended with Sputnik.

WHEN I present these data and the analysis based on them, I often find myself on the defensive. I am accused of being an optimist or a conservative for suggesting that there has been a notable and indeed a dramatic improvement in the quality of Catholic intellectualism in this country. I am at a loss to understand this reaction unless I conclude that certain Catholics have an emotional vested interest in what Father Duff has called "mass masochism." To argue that there has been a change does not mean that there is room for complacency. To say that we have become typical is not to say that we ought to relax. To say that quantitatively our young people are no different from American Protestants in their academic inclinations is not to say that we are qualitatively equal to American Jews in our intellectual achievements. To be content with the mediocrity would be an awful pose for the Universal Church. But I do not think that the cause of progress is served by ignoring the changes of the last decade or by explaining the failures of the past simply in terms of the other worldly values of the clergy or the rigid organizational structure of the Church.

We are still only on the fringes of the best in American intellectualism. The great Western intellectual tradition was Catholic for almost a millennium. It is ours no longer; but we must reclaim it. I do not mean that we should try to dominate it or control it or "take it over." But I mean that our voice must be heard once again within it—and not a weak, second-rate voice, but a strong, competent voice. We must put to rest forever the notion that there is some conflict between Catholicism and the very finest intellectual activity. We cannot be content until Catholic scholarship is better than any other kind; we can bear adequate witness to the Lord in the intellectual world only when we are the very best; and to be no worse than the average is a long, long way from being the best.

There are several obvious areas for immediate improvement: first of all, we must have a great university. Perhaps we are not yet ready to break into the top ten, but we surely must aim for the top twenty. The experience of other schools would suggest that two things are absolutely essential in the development of a great university (or a first-rate liberal arts college): the administrators must have money and freedom. They must be able to pay for the best kind of faculty talent and they must not fear that everything they do is being watched by a disapproving board which will dismiss them for the slightest mistake. I suspect that the money is available for a great Catholic university, though the organizational structure of the American Church is such that the pooling of finances and talent necessary for a first-rate university (and several top flight colleges) is not very probable at the present time. I don't know whether the freedom is yet available, though a good number of people are quite sure that it is not.



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This leads to a second area for immediate improvement. There is probably not much more real abridgment of academic freedom in Catholic colleges than there is in many other schools. However, for one reason or another, Catholic schools have a reputation for being places where there is very little freedom; therefore they must lean over backwards to get rid of this reputation. One way to achieve a better reputation would be to treat the lay faculty as professional colleagues instead of as employees. I was horrified to learn recently that at many of the more famous Catholic universities not only do members of an academic department have no opportunity to pass on the qualifications of a new professor; the departments often do not even meet for years at a time. The chairmen make all the administrative decisions (in consultation with the dean) and the decisions are then relayed to the faculty. This may be a good way to run a religious community (although I don't think it is) but it is no way to run a university. Until the academic departments become authentic associations of professional colleagues rather than merely administrative divisions, the lay faculties are not only going to be dissatisfied; they are also going to discourage the brightest of their students from ever returning to teach at a Catholic college.

HERE is one of the most critical problems the Catholic schools face; their best graduates want no part of teaching at them. A young person entering the academic market place with a Ph.D. from a top flight university realizes only too well that if he once gets into the "Catholic" system he will never get out of it, that he will have to put up with poor pay and poorer status for the rest of his life. Hence he is inclined to try to break into the "major leagues" of secular higher education. If we try to appeal to his desire to serve the Church, he can very easily reply that he will be doing more for the Church by bearing witness on the secular campus. The Catholic schools will not even reclaim some of their own unless they can offer salaries, fringe benefits, prestige, class load, and opportunity for research comparable with that the young assistant professor can find elsewhere. Unless this is done, it is possible that the improvement in the climate of Catholic intellectualism will not be reflected in the faculties at Catholic schools—except perhaps in the religious and clerical members of these faculties; and it would be most unfortunate to have a situation where the faculty with first-rate training was all clerical and the faculty with second-rate training mostly lay. It will cost money to improve the quality of faculties, but surely we have progressed far enough beyond the brick and mortar stage to realize that faculty members are more important than new buildings.

There will have to be an immense improvement in the quality of theological teaching and research at the Catholic colleges and universities. If there is one unique contribution that the Church can make to American academic life, it is in the best possible presentation of the latest developments in the Catholic theological tradition—especially in this time when Catholic theology is having one of its greatest eras. Yet it is hard to escape the impression that with some notable exceptions (especially the work of Fr. Bernard Cooke at Marquette) the theology at Catholic colleges is at best undistinguished. The time is past when the theology courses could be taught by anyone equipped with a Roman collar or a wimple. But it is not merely enough that theology be taught well at the undergraduate level. We must have theological research of the most competent kind, the sort of research which will eventually bring European students to this country to study theology just as ours go to Europe. Such a development does not seem likely in the immediate future.

But Catholic intellectualism must not be limited merely to the Catholic campus. The Newman movement, at least in theory, is no longer a collection of "clubs." It is rather a Catholic "voice" on the secular campus—though often a very muted voice. If such a voice is to be respected it must eventually be involved in the best academic work done on the campus. Catholic research centers, Catholic "colleges" (such as St. Michael's in Toronto), clerics and religious with faculty status, courses in Catholic philosophy and theology, chairs of Roman Catholic studies—these are indispensable ways of making the Catholic voice more effective. It would be a tragedy of almost limitless proportions if administrators of Catholic colleges in selfish shortsightedness attempted to prevent such developments.

Other things must be done. The quality of intellectual training of the clergy and religious must be improved (and here one has the impression that the sisters are far ahead of the priests). Research in areas of special concern to Catholic social teaching must be increased. Catholics must be more involved in the national professional organizations and their own groups —if they are to continue—must drastically re-think their role. There must be more clergy trained to minister to the special spiritual needs of intellectuals. Those in authority must learn to be much less threatened by the criticism that intellectuals feel they must make. A liturgy which is relevant to the problems of the day must help to integrate intellectualism with the rest of life. Ways of subsidizing artistic and literary efforts should be found. The list clearly could go on.

In a sense Catholic intellectual life in this country is at a crossroads; it is not as bad as it was and not nearly as good as it ought to be. The economic base now exists from which a major leap forward could be made; but the organizational structure which could make this leap as successful as it might be is evolving more slowly —as structures do. There has been much progress in

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the last decade and there is the probability of much more in the decade to come. But progress is not inevitable. It is quite possible for decisions to be made (or omitted) which could stunt the growth of the future. I do not think this will happen, but it is by no means impossible. The burden of the decision-makers is a heavy one because if they fail to make the organizational changes necessary to promote further growth, they will have passed up an almost incredible opportunity.

The New Debate—II

Creating Anti-Intellectuals?

JOHN D. DONOVAN

JOHN TRACY ELLIS and Mary Perkins Ryan are uncommon American Catholics for reasons far more significant than their common usage of two family names. In 1955, Monsignor Ellis published his timely and trenchant essay, *American Catholics and the Intellectual Life.* In 1964, Mrs. Ryan published her spiritually moving and provocative book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* The intervening years, it is true, were prominently marked by the related contributions of Thomas O'Dea, Fathers Walter Ong, Gustave Weigel, Andrew Greeley, and others. But the central figures remain Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan. The critical reactions to their works encapsule and symbolize the anti-intellectual posture and dynamics of American Catholicism in the critically important area of education.

By almost any historical yardstick ten years is a very short period of time. The decade between Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan, however, has been magnified because it marked the dramatic coincidence of powerful evolutionary and revolutionary forces within American Catholicism. The election of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States was clearly the most conspicuous symbol of the evolutionary process, but this event, in its turn, reflected the social and economic mobility of Catholics and their more complete identification with dominant values of the American ethos. But the vital center of socio-religious change in the United States as elsewhere was the revolutionary simplicity of Pope John XXIII. His pastoral wisdom unlocked the doors of fear and obscurantism and breathed into the Church a life-giving spirit of inquiry and innovation. Popular images to the contrary, Pope John was an intellectual. His playfulness and his piety (qualities which Richard Hofstadter's brilliant study, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life,* identifies as central to the personality of the intellectual) informed the years of his pontificate and invited Catholics everywhere to think freely and creatively about the new order. In the field of American Catholic education, Monsignor Ellis' and Mrs. Ryan's works are respectively a foreword and an afterword to his *aggiornamento.*

The anti-intellectualism of American Catholics to which these evolutionary and revolutionary forces pertain must, of course, be seen in proper perspective. This is not an easy task. For one thing, the historical dimensions are deep and complex. For another, the meaning of anti-intellectualism (and, correspondingly, of intellectualism) has defied a facile and acceptable definition. On the whole, it has been taken to describe a syndrome of fear, hostility, resentment, suspicion, and ambivalence directed against persons and ideas perceived as dangerous or imprudent because they challenge the moral and/or practical underpinnings of the *status quo.* For American Catholics, ironically, this syndrome has been fed not only by the aggressive egalitarianism of American life but by the defensive, clerical authoritarianism of their religious system. They have not been uniquely anti-intellectual, only more so and especially when the threat of radical criticism and innovation, whether from without or within the Catholic community, seemed to be directed at moral or religious institutions. In politics, in business, in education, and within the Church the critic and the innovator have generally been suspect and, not infrequently, subject to sanctions.

DESPITE these pervasive cultural and religious pressures to anti-intellectualism, no person is likely to be absolutely either intellectual or anti-intellectual in his total orientation. The person who is intellectually open and creative in one area may be ambivalent or hostile to equally critical or innovative persons and ideas in one or more other areas. Similarly, the temper and the targets of anti-intellectualism in the various social institutions (the family, the school, the church, etc.) are relative to the perceived threats which the new ideas and radical criticisms pose for each institution and for those persons having significant roles in them. And, as I shall point out, the source of the threat makes a

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substantial difference in the character of the intellectual or anti-intellectual reaction to criticism and innovation.

Within this context any evaluation of contemporary anti-intellectualism in Catholic education is necessarily partial and incomplete. The sub-system of Catholic education is part of the larger system of American Catholicism. It cannot be forgotten that this sub-system is at once subordinate to the official structure of the Church and inextricably linked to the other sub-systems of the family, parish, ethnic group, social class, etc. As a measure of Catholic intellectualism, therefore, the educational system is more significant in formal and symbolic than in strategic terms. The authority and the responsibility for the educational venture reside in the extra-academic hands of bishops, religious superiors, and pastors functioning within the bureaucratic structure of the Church. They authorize the establishment of the school, set or confirm its goals and policies, and represent the final sources of judgment and appeal. Historically, their schools have been essentially conserving and integrating rather than creative institutions. Spiritual and moral objectives have had primacy, and they have not usually been permitted or encouraged to initiate and lead the criticisms and innovations which the *aggiornamento* of Pope John now seeks. Their failures in this respect are, in fact, the core of the debate which has marked the years between Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan.

Predictably, the reactions of American Catholics to the indictments of non-intellectualism and anti-intellectualism are a mixed bag. The significant point is that in many respects the reactions provide more insight into the problem than do their critical stimuli. Whether spontaneous and visceral or calculated and cerebral, they reflect the anti-intellectual temper and range which still prominently marks the posture and dynamics of Catholic education.

INITIALLY, it is important to note that Catholic reactions to the charges of anti-intellectualism (explicitly by Monsignor Ellis, and implicitly by Mrs. Ryan) and others have not been uniformly hostile. Indeed, Monsignor Ellis' essay won more praise than disapproval, partly because of its tone and professional sponsorship, and partly because the relevant public of scholars to whom it was directed was more open and receptive to "hard" criticism. Nor is it proper to infer that the nay-sayers were uniformly anti-intellectuals who were embittered or blind defenders of the establishment. On the contrary, many were persons of high intelligence whose minds were not closed to the many needs for change within the Church and within the educational system. More often, as their criticisms show, they were academic professionals who were proud of the acheivements and the promise of Catholic education. Suddenly, the values and institutions of their own socialization were under attack and the latent anti-intellectualism nurtured in these worlds exposed their trained incapacity to evaluate criticisms and innovations in open and constructive terms. The patterns of their defensive reactions to Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan are clearcut evidences of the range and the spirit of their common defensive posture.

No attempt will be made here to order either quantitatively or qualitatively the varieties of these reactions. In many quarters the charges of anti-intellectualism were met by a loud and eloquent silence. In other quarters, and with reference to Monsignor Ellis' and Professor O'Dea's works particularly, the reactions ranged from ambivalence to hostility. Some anti-critics were only disturbed by the public washing of Catholic linens; others felt that the criticisms were obsolescent in the light of recent professional institutional growth and development; others resented the invidious comparisons with non-Catholic American education which, they felt, was no better; still others sought to derail the indictments by reaffirming the primacy of spiritual and moral over intellectual goals in Catholic education or by denying the validity of the criticisms with the Scotch verdict of not scientifically proved. Thus, in indirect rather than direct fashion, the defenders of Catholic education against the charges of anti-intellectualism reassured themselves and their constituencies but with a lack of conviction that betrayed their own ambiguity and the vulnerability of their positions.

More recently the debate was re-opened and more directly joined with the emergence, to his own expressed surprise, of a highly intelligent and articulate defender of Catholic education in the person of Father Andrew Greeley. For the entrenched opponents of the critical and innovative interpretations of Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan, Father Greeley's scholarly credentials and persuasive publications were life-lines eagerly grasped and effectively used. As a parish priest and a professional sociologist his was a double-barrelled voice of authority. Moreover, it was a voice which was widely heard because in the past five or six years he has published four books and about one hundred articles on topical Catholic issues.

IN DEBATING terms, Father Greeley's role has been that of rebuttal spokesman for the defenders of Catholic education. The irony is that, given the traditionally low estate of sociology in Catholic education, the once-maligned empiricism of the sociologist was now called upon to "prove" the worth of Catholic education. And to the undisguised joy of all those shaken by the charges of anti-intellectualism, Father Greeley's empiric data purported to do just that. Very directly expressed, he found in his research data virtually no evidence "to support the notion that American Catholics or American Catholic schools are anti-intellectual or anti-scien-

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tific." More than that, in his much quoted *Religion and Career,* Father Greeley added icing to the cake. His comparative analysis of the aspirations, values, and attitudes of Catholic and non-Catholic college graduates showed the Catholic graduate as more promisingly intellectual, if only in slight degree, than his Protestant fellow graduates. The "self-critics," he seemed to be saying, were wrong and the future was rosy-tinged.

The technical problems of sampling, research design, and data interpretation aside, at least three basic considerations seem to deflate the optimism which Father Greeley's study has generated. First, it must be acknowledged that his research shifted the grounds of the debate from the intellectuals we *now* have to the intellectuals we *might* have in the years ahead. Even if his data, therefore, are accepted as valid, they do not directly reply to or discredit the criticisms which were central to the works of Monsignor Ellis and Professor O'Dea. The impoverishment of Catholic intellectual life today cannot be disproved by the yet-to-be-tested optimistic predictions about tomorrow.

Secondly, there is strong reason to suspect that the research materials of Father Greeley's study focus not on identifiable "intellectuals" but on "intelligent" graduates of the collegiate population. This distinction between "intelligence" and "intellect" is, as Hofstadter has pointed out, a critical one. Minds of penetrating intelligence provide the society with its experts and professionals in many fields, but these minds tend to be employed in living *off* rather than *for* ideas. They do not have the free-wheeling, critical, creative, and speculative bent of mind that marks the intellectual. It is here suggesed that the measures of graduate aspirations and work values, particularly in the American cultural setting, are shaky grounds for optimistically projecting an intellectual resurgence in Catholic education. We most certainly do have more intelligent graduates but it is extremely doubtful that we have produced many more intellectuals.

Next, it must be noted that Father Greeley's empiricist concern with the hard facts of computer sociology barely conceals its own modest anti-intellectualism. This criticism becomes relevant not only because he feels that he disproved the "self-critics" who like Monsignor Ellis and Professor O'Dea were "unencumbered with data," but because he has dismissed Mrs. Ryan's book as "armchair research . . . interesting as a curiosity." It must be pointed out that by this non-speculative measure his own ambivalent but insightful "impressions" about "the new breed" among Catholic youth could be (but should not be) peremptorily devalued. In sum, Father Greeley's work on this impressionistic level as well as his research-based studies have contributed considerably to the debate but they have far from disproved the persistence of much anti-intellectualism in Catholic education.

Finally, and more briefly, the contemporary *cause célèbre* of Mrs. Ryan's book deserves special mention. Its predominantly clerical and religious reviewers during the past few months seem to have been shocked to their toenails by the daring of her criticisms and proposals. For them the parochial school system appears to be as sacred as motherhood or, at the very least, as sacred as the public school system is to the American non-Catholic public. Her recommendation, therefore, that serious considerations be given to setting it aside because it is no longer exclusively or even best suited to the spiritual and practical needs of Christian education today has provoked a massive, emotional hemorrhage. Indeed, at this point in time, the issues she raises have hardly been confronted. Instead an *a priori* promise that her criticisms will be empirically disproved was wildly cheered by Catholic school educators.

The significant point is that her success in sparking such a violently critical, even personally abusive and unjust, reaction is *prima facie* evidence that anti-intellectual values and sentiments are still conspicuous in Catholic education. What made her even more vulnerable to this reaction, it should be further noted, was the fact that she was not a clerical expert within the educational establishment, but a lay, female ideologue whose criticisms and proposals for a truly Christian education wore the mantle of the Council. In the classic anti-intellectual tradition she seems to be feared in some quarters as a subversive whose ideas threaten to destroy the system of Catholic education. And much more is yet to be heard along these lines.

ALL IN ALL, the decade of debate which extends between Monsignor Ellis and Mrs. Ryan has not so much seen an "orgy of self-criticism" as a process of intellectual fermentation. The discomfort it may have caused is the least acceptable reason for any discontinuance or moratorium on it. The positive facts are that Catholic education has made substantial progress at all levels and that Catholic schools are increasingly producing graduates who are men and women of high intelligence as well as strong religious convictions. It is equally clear, however, that they are not yet producing the dedicated intellectuals of Monsignor Ellis' cast nor the truly Christian person of Mrs. Ryan's prayer. Their indictments of the American Catholic impoverishment in these respects have been a valuable service and have been welcomed as a spur to reform in some quarters. In other sectors, unfortunately, their criticisms have deepened the suspicion and fear of the intellect and of intellectuals. They have also provoked renewed efforts at moral rather than intellectual rearmament; or they have led to the submission of the part-way house of intelligence for that of the intellect. The door is ajar but it is not really open.

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Progress and Anxiety

JAMES W. TRENT

LAST JANUARY, speaking before a group of Catholic college graduates, Pope Paul took note of the dualism between the religious and secular cultures which has developed over the ages. He proclaimed as the special role of the graduates that of forming a bridge between the two cultures. They should bring to the professional world their Christian evidence, and to the religious world their secular testimony. The Pope added that the new problems of the world cannot be treated "in terms of old handbooks" but "must be considered in the light of systematic and scientific research."

However discomforting, there is a long tradition of anti-intellectualism in the American Church which *has* led to a dualism here between religious and secular worlds. A number of historical and social conditions may account for this phenomenon: an immigrant background which placed little value on education; dependency on an autocratic, poorly educated and defensive clergy; and the establishment of intellectually isolated schools among other things. They led to a relatively closed ecclesiastical system contaminated by policies and beliefs which militated against the intellectual life. The system inculcated intellectual restriction by shielding its members from exposure to the anxiety-producing intellectual cross-currents of the society outside Church and family.

This background may in great part explain the current status of American Catholic intellectuality. "Intellectuality" here does not refer only to the production of creative works by eminent figures in *Who's Who*. Intellectuality in its fullest interpretation is a complex of intense and deep interests in scholarly and cultural pursuits; an openness to and an active seeking out of the mysteries and beauties of life.

Of course, one mark of a group's intellectuality is the number of tangible intellectual products reflecting its interests. Today, graduate work is especially a prerequisite for much creative and scholarly productivity. Thus, it is important to know that until very recently Catholics were underrepresented in both undergraduate and graduate schools. There is evidence that the Catholic–non-Catholic gap in college and graduate school entrance is now closing, but at the same time there is long distance between entering college and obtaining intellectual stature, whether in terms of attitudes or credentials. What is so far known about Catholic students on this subject is not very positive, but perhaps of more primary concern.

Two recent studies, one conducted last year on current graduate students, indicate that there remains a disproportionate lack of Catholics working at the doctoral level. But regardless of the proportion of Catholics entering graduate school or attaining doctoral degrees, questions persist about the scholarly bent of these students. Data from both regional and cross-country samples indicate a disproportionate lack of intellectual interests and attitudes among Catholic graduate students. Significantly more than non-Catholics, these students exhibit a tendency toward closed-mindedness and authoritarianism, traits marked by provincial, stereotyped, uncritical, and uncreative thinking.

These anti-intellectual tendencies have been found to be even more pronounced among Catholic undergraduates. Indeed, Catholic college students are the only students who have been found to be more intellectually docile and frequently more rigidly authoritarian in attitude as seniors than they were as freshmen—in contrast with all non-Catholic students observed, and regardless of the students' level of ability or socio-economic status. These same tendencies have also been found to be unduly shared by Catholic faculty members. Perhaps the most damaging commentary in this respect is Professor John Donovan's observation that a large proportion of Catholic faculty members show a surprising lack of commitment to their vocations as college teachers.

NOR IS IT just a matter of attitude and interest, but professional pursuits as well. A consistent over-representation of Catholics is found in the business, engineering, law and medical professions, which deal more with objects than ideas, in spite of the highly developed technical skills these professions require. Moreover, research invariably reveals that these professional groups —particularly business and engineering—are characterized by security-seeking, authoritarian, uncreative and anti-intellectual thinking far above all other professional, occupational, or educational groups studied.

This rather sorry catalog of intellectual omissions is not a matter of twenty or thirty years ago. Some of the findings cited are as recent as yesterday; most of them are the results of investigations conducted within the last three or four years. They include the efforts of

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such psychologists as Professors Dressel, Rokeach and Holland, and such sociologists as Professors Riesman, Lazarsfeld and Berelson. For the most part, the studies are based upon a variety of criteria and carefully devised research instruments, frequently tested to assure that they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure; they possess both reliability and validity.

Needless to say, these findings reflect on the best-educated within the Catholic system. It is the educated Catholics who, above all, would be expected to participate in the great flow of creativity. Yet, the traditions they have established, the attitudes they have developed, and the pursuits they have followed have had the effect of leading them into intellectual alienation and mediocrity.

However, dynamic changes in the Church are occurring not only on a world-wide ecumenical basis but very dramatically in America. The candid self-criticism of Catholic educators themselves has added impetus to some of the most forward-looking movements in the Church today. To be sure, there are a few members of the Church who carp at this criticism as "breast-beating." But constructive criticism of this kind is not the *mea culpa* of the Pharisee. Rather, this criticism has led to such positive innovations as the Sister Formation Movement, and the increased attention being paid to the quality of seminary education. It has led as well to the recognition of the participant role the mature layman should have in the Church.

Inevitably, these kinds of intellectual stirrings center in the college. In fact, many Catholic colleges have instigated innovations in their programs designed to stimulate creative and intellectual productivity among their students and alumni. Perhaps more important is the growing recognition of the fact that the majority of Catholic college students are not attending Catholic colleges. These students are no longer being viewed as unfortunates who are sure to lose their faith, but as students who may profit from good religio-academic Catholic centers within the secular university framework. Finally, there is an increasing call for a Catholic education designed for a changing world, and in some quarters there exists an acceptance of the "young Catholic intellectuals" who may contribute to this change.

The change, of course, is just beginning, and only in limited instances. Its effusion throughout the American Catholic culture has yet to be realized. To be sure, there appears to be a considerable increase of Catholics in college and graduate school. But this phenomenon may reflect the affluence of a socially mobile subculture more than a surge towards intellectual pursuit. There is every indication that the educational aspirations of Catholics have risen to greater heights than their intellectual attitudes. In the manner of T. S. Eliot's theory of the dis-

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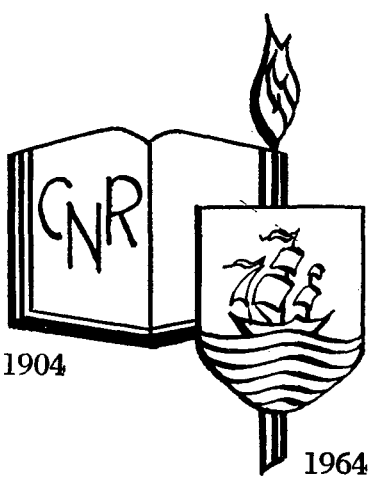

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association of the senses, it is possible that the attainment of an intellectual status may be espoused mentally and vocally without the emotional acceptance of what intellectuality involves, whether on an individual or institutional basis. The authoritarian, intellectually docile graduate student may gain tools, techniques, and jargon, but he will contribute little more to the flow of intellectuality and creativity than the ordinary high school graduate. Thus, even under the best of circumstances, the few in the Church who are intellectually enlightened may be hard put to reach instantaneously the many who are apathetically alienated.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that there will be a continuing intellectual growth in the Church if the present trends persist. In the foreseeable future the status of American Catholic intellectuality will reach that of non-Catholics. But just as this transition cannot be expected to occur immediately, neither can it be expected to occur without some repercussions.

A sudden openness to the intellectual world will be a source of anxiety for many Catholics. Such is the price of transition from the security of an authoritarian ghetto mentality to an open involvement in the world of ideas and innovations. Accustomed principles will appear irrelevant until re-examined, given new light, and reapplied to the ever-changing situation of a world possessing few sure answers but many new problems. Anxiety may thus result from deliberately seeking intellectual enlightenment without authoritarian, *a priori* defenses. It is no wonder, then, that those whom I found in my own doctoral study to be the least authoritarian and most intellectual among samples of Catholic college students were also significantly more anxious than their less intellectual and more authoritarian classmates. The anxiety of transition may be intensified for the Catholic intellectual when he has to face the increasingly apparent reaction of those who do not want their comfortable Catholicism disturbed. And yet the Catholic intellectual, more exposed to the ideas, insights, and roles of society, is bound to approach his Church with less unquestioning acceptance and more critical appreciation. There can be no high order of intellectuality without a spirit of dissent; that is, open, critical inquiry.

At any rate, unless Catholics work for a position of creative, intellectual, and social leadership, they will fail to bring the vital values uniquely theirs to a preoccupied and frequently cynical society. They will thus be doing disservice to the Church, to society and to themselves. Out of touch with the flow of life, Catholics will no longer be able to make any attempt to restore the goodness and perfection of Christ in the world around them. They will fail to form that essential bridge between the religious and secular cultures. As the man in Christ's parable, they will, instead, remove what little support exists for that bridge by the hiding of their own talents under the ground.

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THE SCREEN

You Must Call on Us Too

HAVING been greatly impressed and enthusiastic about Friedrich Duerrenmatt's play, "The Visit," in which the Lunts appeared some years ago, I was looking forward to the movie version. Lynn Fontanne, as the world's richest woman who returns after twenty years to the Middle European town of Guellen to complete her long-planned vengeance, was the very epitome of sophisticated malevolence; and Alfred Lunt, as the man who had seduced her and driven the pregnant girl out of town and on the road to prostitution, managed to win some sympathy even in his fine portrait of a mean, sniveling coward who finally learns to face his punishment manfully. Their first-rate performances and the handsome stage production, with its sparse scenery, sinister shadows and trappings, added a great deal to Duerrenmatt's frightening and cynical parable.

Although it has a different ending, the movie of "The Visit" tells practically the same story, the story of a community, already reduced to poverty and hard times by the wealthy woman, that is now completely demoralized by her diabolic revenge. She offers the town two million dollars—one for the town itself and one to be divided among its citizens—if they will kill the man who seduced her. Needless to say, this is a fascinating, albeit unpleasant tale.

Making his film in Rome, where the entire village of Guellen was built at Cinecitta Studios, Julien Derode gave "The Visit" a good production with a fine cast. But the movie medium does not lend itself well to this shadowy, baleful tale. The symbols and allegorical details look somewhat foolish in the bright daylight. At first the citizens are shocked by the women's offer, but then slowly it becomes obvious that they are reconsidering as they begin to buy on credit from the general store owned by the seducer of twenty years ago, and then buy in a big way from the trucks well stocked with goods from out-of-town. The implications are frightening.

Under Bernhard Wicki's direction, the cast come through well. Ingrid Bergman succeeds in conveying evil as the vengeful woman of the world, but she looks much too young and her smooth face hardly bears the imprint of the woman's many years of malignant scheming. Anthony Quinn puts over the fear and panic felt by the man who is the main victim of her revenge, but at no time does he arouse any sympathy, even when one is appalled by the awful behavior and thinking of his neighbors. The supporting cast, especially Irina

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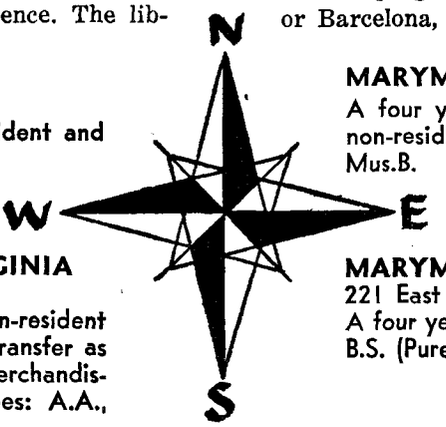

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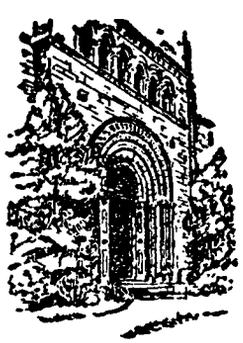

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Demick, as a young woman whom the rich visitor frees from the town, is good throughout.

While this version of "The Visit" is neither as convincing or scary as the stage play, it still holds interest. And it still manages to come through with a disturbing sermon on man's selfishness, cupidity, and inhumanity to man.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

CORRESPONDENCE

"Ecumenism Behind Bars"

Delaware, Ohio

TO THE EDITORS: Robert McAfee Brown, in "Ecumenism Behind Bars," [Sept. 4] lamented the failure of "a Catholic priest from the locale of the arrest" to visit him and his fellow freedom-riders in the Tallahassee jail.

This past Easter, March 29, 1964, I was among seven Methodist theological teachers arrested in Jackson, Miss., for trying to integrate a Sunday service of worship. Two of the four clergymen who visited us during our two-day stay there were Roman Catholic priests, and one of these men visited us on two separate occasions.

As we returned home, we could not forget our Catholic friends and benefactors who remained behind. They could not leave Jackson, they knew this before visiting us, yet they put themselves in jeopardy for our sake and the Gospel's. Our initial temptation was to despair over their plight and our responsibility for it, but that mood passed. We were soon rejoicing in the knowledge that, though the racists had done their evil best, the Church of Jesus Christ had not been finally overcome—no, not even in Jackson, Miss.

EVERETT TILSON
Methodist Theological School

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: In his account of imprisonment in Tallahassee ["Ecumenism Behind Bars," Sept. 4],

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Robert McAfee Brown speaks of receiving his "most humbling of all" telegram from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Brown's moving piece is humbling to Catholics, particularly in his emphasis on the telegrams and prayers by Catholic priests, religious and laymen as signs of agape and ecumenism, while wishing "that a priest were in [our] midst" among the imprisoned, and with great hope and charity suggesting that in another year or so a priest from the locale could "find his way clear to visit the jail and pray with his Protestant and Jewish brethren."

The incident reminds this reader of one in another sphere a few years ago, when a ranking administrator on a Catholic campus, God rest his soul, responded to the request of a faculty committee for the university's cooperation in forming a credit union by blandly stating that the Church's endorsement of credit unions in no way indicated that a credit union was a good institution for this university at this time.

COMMONWEAL articles of recent months about the Church's movement and handicaps in social and moral aspects of civil rights activity, in Philadelphia, in Los Angeles and elsewhere, have described with honorable candor and acerbity problems we face which would be unknown to many persons who have not had personal experience with them. The gaps and obstacles between principle and practice, belief and behavior, surely constitute one of our most poignant spiritual and social issues for all Catholics, ordained, religious and lay, in this second half century in which our Church made *aggiornamento* an inter-lingual word for all the world to hear.

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October Poem

But in the morning light,
each leaf, as sharp as flame,
trembles as if about to burst
into words and carve courage
in this day as cold as stone.
That bush might burn on Sinai.
And I sit waiting for the thunder
of God's voice, while students
walk by in deaf and dumb concern
for coffee before class.

An acorn stuns the morning silence
like the faint reminiscence of sin.
As gentle as bird's wing, the wind
slowly brushes the blaze of this
bright bush; leaves tremble again,
but one by one leave the branch
more bare, the morning mute.

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ica has been little discussed in writings which have come to my attention. What is being done, what can be done, to encourage and build vocations, particularly vocations to the priesthood, among Catholics of Negro and other racial and ethnic minority groups? Although Negro priests and sisters other than those in predominantly Negro parishes and institutions are not unknown in our country, they are still a visible rarity. It seems likely that some of our religious orders have still to greet their first non-Caucasian postulant. Within all too recent years I was told by a nun whose order conducts a well known girls' college that one of their problems arose when Negro students desired to enter the order, for the order had "not yet worked that out."

A few years ago, one of the missionary magazines published a striking photograph of a small Negro boy with face upturned to receive the Host from a white priest at the altar rail, with a caption to the effect that "you can't beat this for integration." Lovely as was the photography and important as was the portrayal, the thought must have crossed many readers' minds that this would be "beaten for integration" when the child or adult layman was white and the priest bringing him Our Lord's body was Negro. . . .

One year ago when I returned to New York City after several years' absence, I was fortunate to find myself in a parish with one Negro among several priests. The parish is small and materially it has seen better days. It is in a section where many residents of both decayed slums and new "luxury" apartments appear not to be church-goers. The parish, like the diocese, is not known for going out on a limb to engage the congregation in liturgical participation. But there is a demonstrated vitality. It is seen in the action of men who move quickly from the pews to the sanctuary to serve Mass in place of over-sleeping or non-existent altar boys. It is seen in the person of children and adults, including Anglo-Saxon, Negro, Oriental and Puerto Rican faces, at Mass and waiting at the confessional. A new message has reached the minds of some long-time parishioners who speak wistfully of the changing neighborhood but who seek and receive sacramental nourishment from an "interracial" priesthood in their parish.

MARJORIE MURPHY

BOOKS

American-Soviet Convergence: Fact or Fiction?

Political Power: USA/USSR. By Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington. Viking Press. $7.50.

by William V. O'Brien

THERE has been increasing acceptance in recent years of the theory of American-Soviet "convergence." This theory holds that the American and Soviet societies are growing more and more alike, primarily because their industrial character and their mutual interest is creating an affluent, materialistic wonderland. As they converge, it is thought their ideological differences will cease to dominate their relations.

Among the implications of this theory there are at least two which cause grave concern. On the positive side, if the theory is valid it could mean that there are better prospects for peace, arms control and world law than at any time since 1917. On the negative side, a Christian cannot contemplate with satisfaction the proposition that the purely material elements in his society are so overwhelmingly decisive that its normative elements fade into oblivion.

Nor can an American easily concede that his country will become essentially indistinguishable from the Soviet Union and that real cultural freedom and intellectual life will be found only in Paris, New Delhi or some other center of true civilization (a prediction often made in those centers).

Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington, two established experts on Soviet affairs and international relations, have taken a long look at this theory of convergence and concluded that it is not substantiated by recent history. In a long-overdue comparative study of the American and Soviet political systems they analyze the organizations and dynamics of the two systems and find them, on the whole, still vastly different. Four aspects are emphasized.

First, they compare the relationship between political ideas and politics in the two countries. "The strength of the Soviet system flows from the supremacy of the political ideology and institutions over Soviet society and the political leaders' ability to control that society." Thus, "the Soviet political system appears to be more vigorous, more capable of mobilizing national resources for specific political ends, more likely to be led by skilled practitioners of power." That it is not infallible, however, is shown repeatedly in the book, particularly in a case study of Soviet policy towards Hungary.

Moreover, this concentration of power has a restrictive effect on economic and intellectual life and produces "tensions between the political system and other social forces and institutions." In the United States, on the other hand, strength comes from "the close unity between society and polity and from the unceasing dynamic adjustments between the two." But political power is neither as great nor as controlled with a view to attaining basic public objectives. "Thus if it can be said that American politics can best be understood in terms of American society, Soviet society can best be understood in terms of Soviet politics."

Second, Brzezinski and Huntington find that although Soviet "politization" of its citizens is not complete, the Soviet system "has created a more effective system of control and

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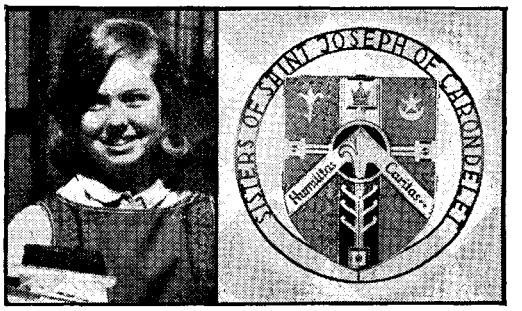
mobilization and maintained it for a longer period of time than has any other comparable political system." This system produces a "high rate of individual alienation in the form of corruption, delinquency, fascination with 'bourgeois' morals and the like" among Soviet citizens. But mass alienation has been prevented by the "mass social orthodoxy" created by the state. In the United States individual alienation is less of a problem "because of the more limited scope of politics." But mass alienation in the American society which is not controlled by the state is more of a potential danger.

Third, the study shows that Soviet leadership combines vast bureaucratic and political experience. It is more cohesive, singleminded and "accustomed to thinking in terms of power" than American leadership. American leadership reflects the pluralism and openness of our society. It tends to be inexperienced; there is much "learning on the job." Moreover, the decision-making process is dispersed throughout the government and the society. Important decisions are often made in the middle echelons of government and are affected by groups outside of government whereas in the Soviet Union they are made only at the top by the leading Party professionals without any direct influence from non-governmental sources.

The price which the Soviets pay for their system is a serious vulnerability in periods where power has to be transferred. In the United States, on the other hand, power passes quickly, smoothly and frequently. Thus, "Crisis or breakdown is more likely in the Soviet Union than in the United States." But Brzezinski and Huntington caution us that the end is not in sight for a system which has "functioned successfully without a major breakdown for almost fifty years."

Thus the authors find that the United States and the Soviet Union are in fact still vastly different political systems. Turning to some specific arguments about the inevitability of convergence they find, first, that both countries really seek not convergence but rather the "submergence" of the other society. We



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think that they are becoming more like us and they the opposite. But the arguments that both sides use are not conclusive. Brzezinski and Huntington conclude:

"In effect, no one-to-one correlation exists between economic and political change. A political system is influenced and shaped by continuing cultural, social, historical and traditional forces. Even more important, a political system has its own staying power and helps shape the course of economic and social development."

This is not to say that the two systems may not learn from each other by co-discovery. But this is not the same as convergence. Moreover, Brzezinski and Huntington demonstrate that convergence is not, as is often contended, "the only hope for peace." "Social-political uniformity and peace need not go hand in hand."

As the chapter on the mutual problems of alliance management shows, this is well demonstrated by Russia's problems with China and ours with France. Moreover, they find that affluence and industrialization have enriched democracy rather than corrupted it. Thus this book holds out the hope that we may find our way to peace, retain our normative values, and not succumb to an omnipotent materialistic determinism.

C. P. Snow's Latest

Corridors of Power. By C. P. Snow. Scribner's. $5.95.

by Brian Wilkie

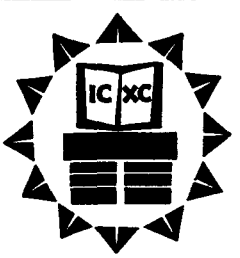
THIS is the ninth in C. P. Snow's sequence of novels under the general title "Strangers and Brothers." This newest addition to the sequence is timely in more than one way. Like other works by Snow, it undertakes to probe a definitive issue of our age. Moreover — although Snow could scarcely have foreseen this when he planned *Corridors of Power*—a novel dealing, as this one does, with the problem of an independent British nuclear force and complicated by a sexual scandal involving a Cabinet minister cannot fail to have a special piquancy for those with an eye on this year's general election in Britain.

Corridors of Power blends, somewhat uneasily, the strategies of novel, documentary, and philosophical essay. The setting is the middle 1950's, the central figure a defense minister, Roger Quaife, who with a complicated mixture of selfish cold-bloodedness and selfless idealism struggles to "power" and then tries to promote at the higest level of government a policy of nuclear disengagement which Quaife knows is in advance of general opinion but which he believes must be adopted now, before catastrophe occurs.

As human drama, much of the novel's effectiveness comes from the conflict in Quaife between his sense of the urgent need for immediate action and his astuteness in knowing when he may safely take a small step forward and when (in the banal jargon of politics) he must "draw in his horns." One senses too, both in Quaife and in other characters, the strain put on loves and friendships by the complex and ever-shifting conflicts between loyalty to persons and loyalty to principles.

On the level of ideas and as a documentary of how high political and bureaucratic decisions are made, *Corridors of Power* is absorbingly interesting. Snow writes clearly, as one must for these purposes. But as a novel, as art of high order, the book is not entirely successful, despite its puff on the dust-jacket as "probably the finest political novel of our day." For all its clarity, Snow's style (or narrator Lewis Eliot's, if the distinction matters here) has a limp chattiness which sometimes makes the book's issues and events seem trivial, gossipy. ("Yet there it was. At once the gossips were tipping Ministers whom Collingwood appeared to fancy. They all agreed that Roger's stock was on the way down.")

And, despite some brilliant psychological observations about the characters, they seem only half alive;



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their complexity emerges more in what is said about them than in what they show themselves to be. Nor in this instance can one validly plead that Snow's ultimate interest is really in ideas and policies, for among the important issues aired in the book is the very question to what extent individual men can influence the course of government and of history. The problem is the one formulated by Tolstoy at the end of *War and Peace*, and in order to give it force in the context of art one needs, as Tolstoy needed and managed to create, real and interesting personalities.

The comparison with Tolstoy, top-heavy though it may seem, is relevant. For in *Corridors of Power* Snow has a kind of epic purpose: to show the truly dedicated politician as heroic in spite of his seemingly unexotic life in the "corridors" and at cocktail parties. The trouble is, Snow sometimes suggests (contrary to his intentions, one feels sure) that the world of high politics is a pretty glamorous world after all, even on its surface. "[Quaife] knew the temptations, the charm of politics, the romantic trappings—but there were times when he wanted to throw them right away." What romantic trappings? There is a positive *naïveté* in the assumption that the exchange of veiled innuendoes with the shooting set at country houses, full-regalia dinners, and cocktail parties with crusty industrialists or with the gossiping political *cognoscenti* are in themselves exciting and glamorous trappings. "Politics," Quaife declares, "is too serious a business to be played like a private game at a private party"; one wonders though, whether Snow really sees that point himself or whether he believes, along with so many American businessmen, that serious matters ought to be decided when people are at play.

Still, if that is the way things are, so be it, and may Snow receive all due credit for documentary truthfulness. But he ought, one feels, to sense and convey better the wry irony that inheres in a situation where tempests are almost literally made in teapots and cocktail mixers, a situation which in the hands of a less reverent author might easily explode into bitter social comedy. The very title *Corridors of Power* has a whiff of complacent, melodramatic worldliness about it that is slightly embarrassing.

To be fair, one must recognize that Snow is attempting something formidably difficult, and that in most ways he succeeds better than others who have tried to write fiction about large contemporary issues. This novel, for example, is beautifully put together and builds skillfully to the final and climactic section wherein the outcome of Quaife's efforts is decided by Parliamentary division. But, above all, the book's virtues are those of a good documentary anatomy of the political and bureaucratic processes.

Man and Technique

The Technological Society. By Jacques Ellul. Trans. from the French by John Wilkinson. Knopf. $10.95.

by John P. Sisk

IN THE foreword to this revised American edition of *The Technolog-*

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ical Society, Jacques Ellul speaks of his book as "a call to the sleeper to awake." What has put the sleeper to sleep is the technological phenomenon, the most dangerous form of determinism in the modern world. Professor Ellul appeals to the individual's sense of responsibility to see the determinisms that press on him, to the end not that technology will be abolished but transcended. I suspect, however, that the book itself is less likely to wake the sleeper than to persuade him that he is trapped in a nightmare from which he cannot possibly awake.

Ellul's "technique" may be defined as the inevitable product of the rationalizing, order- and clarity-loving human consciousness. It must not be identified with the machine, though without the machine the world of technique would be impossible. Technique, the product of the desire to do everything the most efficient way, turns everything into a machine. It is the enemy of all that is natural, inspirational, instinctive, traditional, personal, eccentric, disorderly, secret or sacred. It aspires to produce the totally planned, integrated and homogeneous mass society.

Because technique tends to be an autonomous and self-augmenting thing, all current attempts to make it serve human ends are vain: they simply fight technique with more technique. Technique serves only itself. Professor Ellul is convinced that there is a way out, but he does not specify what that way is, and we must take what comfort we can from the translator's assurance that Ellul's point of view is Christian.

The author, a professor at the University of Bordeaux and a prominent figure in the ecumenical movement, develops his thesis with clarity and an impressive (if inadequately documented) erudition in five long chapters. The first two consider the nature and history of technique, the third and fourth show the effects of technique on the economy and the state, while the fifth shows the effects on human beings, body and soul, as technique attempts to exploit all human psychic forces. At the end we see man becoming more and more liberated from physical restraints but more and more enslaved by abstract ones. Even dream life is invaded as archetypal figures are replaced by machines. Thus we move inexorably towards a synthetic and dead world populated only by rats and men.

In the above summary I have tried to suggest the hyperbolic nature of Professor Ellul's argument, a quality that is especially apparent in his dismissal of opposing views as preposterous, utopian, idealist, simple-minded or hopelessly locked in the realm of fantasy. For instance, Toynbee's attempt to separate organization and technique is dismissed as a merely "comforting" view of history, while Father Teilhard's views are rejected as "extravagant metaphysic." The cursory rejection of Teilhard points to what is crucial in *The Technological Society:* its bias against consciousness. Theologically, the book suggests the Calvinist fundamentalism that was explicitly stated in Ellul's previous book, *The Theological Foundations of Law.*

At the same time (and making an interesting combination with the Calvinism) there is the author's polarity of the artificial and the natural

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—a polarity that might ingratiate him with an American audience but which gives his argument a dangerously pastoral grounding. Ellul writes as if the difference between the natural and the artificial were a genuinely disjunctive one. In other words, he is hardly inclined to define the artificial as the product of that self-aware and critical state of nature in which the human being is able to realize that he had once been "natural." This means that, *mutatis mutandis,* he is in agreement with D. H. Lawrence that Sir Clifford Chatterley is the ultimate menace.

The book, nevertheless, presents a formidable case. With respect to one of its chief objectives—the deflation of the twentieth-century Enlightenment dream of a technological heaven on earth—it can be devastatingly successful. As Robert K. Merton points out in his foreword, we live in a civilization "committed to a quest for continually improved means to carelessly examined ends." Certainly Professor Ellul will force many of his readers to examine these ends more carefully.

Crying for Help

A Single Man. By Christopher Isherwood. Simon and Schuster. $4.

by George Greene

A SINGLE MAN chronicles one day in the life of an aging professor—defensively bright, something of a poseur, homosexual—from the time he gets up until he goes to sleep, drunk, that same night. George laments the recent death of the youth who shared his home. In class he discusses Aldous Huxley. He visits a friend of his roommate, a girl now mortally ill. He dines with a homesick woman from his native England. By chance he meets one of his male students at a waterfront bar. They go swimming, and by the close George has reentered the frantic courtroom which is his mind, pleading his own defense.

Mr. Isherwood once described himself as "a prehistoric Angry Young Man," and what is liveliest in this *nouvelle* is its *mise en scène,* a once wild beach colony near Los Angeles. Isherwood catches deftly the escapism of Southern California, with its Gauguin décor and its bizarre couplings. The original settlers wanted "a subtropical English village with Montmartre manners. . . ." More recently domesticity has launched an attack. Neighbors like Mrs. Strunk are apostles of legitimacy and breeding, yet she cannot curb the hammer-wielding of her own child. "' . . . I never hear the noise children make —just as long as it's a happy noise.'" One major difference, though, between Isherwood and his junior colleagues is that his hero is not so much trapped by a milieu as inclined to exploit it. When George charges down the freeway, unreality stimulates him like a second cup of coffee. He competes vehemently, if not mindlessly, in the "mad Metropolitan chariot race. . . ."

Academic centers, at least the one George calls "Sleepy Hollow State," strike me as a set for some impromptu, disjointed pre-talkies film. Apparently, West Coast education has resisted bourgeois intrusions better than local real estate. George enters class like "an actor on his way

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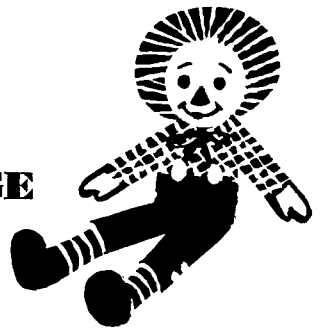

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up from the dressing room. . . ." His demeanor comes perilously close to flirtation as he "presides over the novel like an attendant at a carnival booth. . . ." Huxley's *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* becomes an excuse for a speech, which mixes bravery with taunts, on a subject closer to George's private fears. " 'Do you think it makes people nasty to be loved?' " he demands. " 'You know it doesn't. Then why should it make them nice to be loathed?' "

One acknowledges the skill, almost casual, with which Mr. Isherwood traps his central figure in revealing gestures. There is an appropriate sad vigilance as George keeps women at arm's length, a reaction which ascends from parlor banter to ill-concealed fright. His friend Charlotte's house is filled with cushions, "too tiny for any useful purpose but perfect for throwing at people." Furniture doesn't provide an adequate target for long. Like a policeman in a hostile neighborhood, George notes more private frailties. "Her dress shows a grotesque kind of gallantry, ill-advised but endearing. . . ." Later, drunk now, he sneers at the abandon with which she moves closer, "as though she were peering up at him, fishlike, through all the liquor she has drunk."

Surfaces in this world have been observed with the baleful clarity of a camera. But sometimes one gets the impression that a huge searchlight has been turned on an empty sand dune. The party-goers who were shouting so bravely moments ago have all run away. And the most elusive, for all his conscious earthiness, is the professor. George looks down on smog-girt Los Angeles, and he feels like a Jewish prophet—a choice of role which underlines his romanticizing urge. He lives far closer to what he praises as "the persecuted yet undying old gods of disorder. . . ." He wants people " 'to exchange *some* kind of a signal, however garbled, before it's too late. . . .' " Yet his chief drive is not so much a love of life as a cry for help. Fear hovers over this book like the stench from a school of fish trapped by low tide. George loves more than anyone, even more than his beloved Jim, the fact that he belongs to "that

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marvelous minority, The Living." In the bar, George concedes how paralyzing a hold certain facts have on his mind. "'The future—that's where death is.'" While he boasts about independence, his behavior betrays an impulse to deny his total being, to define himself as a body rather than as a person, vain, lustful, but unquestionably dualistic, like the other three billions of us. One grows tired of the sentimental assumption that inversion is an absolute prerequisite for any sense of—and share in—the nightmare of mortality. It is not George's bitchy asides and sensual reveries which make him moving as well as irritating. It is those moments when he escapes from the tyranny of self. Helping the admittedly tedious Charlotte forget she has been abandoned by her husband, George has one of his rare encounters with "this utterly mysterious unsensational thing . . . just plain happiness." It is fitting that we never know his full name. Neither does he.

Robert Frost

Selected Letters of Robert Frost. Edited by Lawrence Thompson. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. $10.

by Rosemary F. Deen

THESE beautifully edited letters of a poet and a man are fascinating. The career of the poet is fairly well-known in outline. The letters fill in this outline with important details—about what Frost wrote in his twenty years of obscurity, for example, or how well articulated his theories of poetry were by the time of his wonderful years in England. Frost, the man, is obscure, and the letters show why. Complex and adept at "hiding," he was both sensitive and tough, successful and besieged with griefs. The letters will begin to answer some questions and raise others. Lawrence Thompson's strategy is not so much to answer questions as to situate them so that they can be asked intelligently.

One of his major purposes is to assist in making those "delicate" adjustments in the public response to a major poet that must be made after his death. Part of Frost's great charm,

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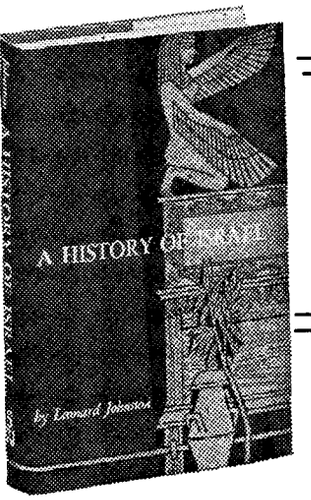

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as Mr. Thompson says, has been the "apparently simple artistry of his poems," and his "natural, direct, and confiding" personal manner. But, of course, "he was never as natural as he seemed." Mr. Thompson wants to "unmask" Frost, but in a special way. Frost's masks were dramatic—consciously assumed and stylized aspects of his complex self. Mr. Thompson knows that "the various processes of unmasking would include sympathetic explanations of the difference between the myth and the man. . . ."

What do the letters reveal directly about the man? For one thing, his extraordinary ambition. He promotes his career with awesome energy. Except among worms, I suppose there is nothing wrong with ambition. As the letters show, however, it is pretty hard to get as an unmixed blessing. What the letters reveal obliquely will exercise the reader's powers of definition. One of Frost's large themes is that neither the meaning of poetry nor the experience of life can be explained in reasoned discourse. He insisted on being a *poet,* partly by "throwing away" prose: refusing to print lectures or letters and filling his talk with irony. In a real sense poetry is inarticulate—"unwilling to explain."

Hard as it is to make Frost "explain" his ambiguities, I wonder whether Mr. Thompson should try to *solve* the puzzle of Frost's religion. Elinor Frost had her ideas about faith: "Nonsense and you know its nonsense Rob Frost, only you're afraid you'll have bad luck or lose your standing in the community if you speak your mind." Mr. Thompson feels that "a deep religious faith had been nurtured in Frost by his mother during his childhood, and although he subjected different aspects of this faith to severe challenge, mockery and skepticism, he never rejected it for long." I doubt it. Nothing that Frost says outside poetry can equal the expression in his poetry of a sense of evil that amounts almost to Satanism. It ranges from the "metaphysical horror of evil as blankness, through the physical evil of waste, to the human evils of madness, indifference, and malice."

Frost's poetry also expresses faith.

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Perhaps we should distinguish between faith or belief and prayer or offering. To make religion wholly a matter of belief is to reduce it to its *ratio*—to use Blake's term—and to make it an impossibility much of the time. Belief is always beset by problems. In the stress of life, who can wait for the resolution of belief to pray? "Oh, Lord, I believe. Help Thou my unbelief," expresses the paradox of prayer in the irresolution of belief.

The life that we see in the letters enlarges this problem, I think, without solving it. The letters show Frost's ambition: its painful offshoots, fear, guilt, and self-doubt; and its wicked offshoots, pride, anger, and vindictiveness. They also show his endurance of the losses of his life as purges ("I got humbled."). Perhaps the pattern—or the hope—was that the sufferings had cleansed the ambition of its self-seeking and left it as the energy of the workman; that those awful fears, unable to riot in meanness, would "settle down into a deep inward fear that my best offering may not prove acceptable in his sight." The offering is the lifework: "My offering of verse on the altar." Perhaps ambition becomes religion (somewhat as it did in Milton), the pride of talent subdued to the need to serve with "that one talent which is death to hide."

Lawrence Thompson is eminently intelligent and fair and he has given us a valuable book. He does justice to Frost both by sympathy and by justice. We learn, for example, that it was Archibald MacLeish's two years of work that got Pound freed from confinement and not (as Frost supposed) Frost's few chats with higher-ups. The abundance of editorial material makes good Mr. Thompson's offer to the reader to "roll his own" biography of Frost.

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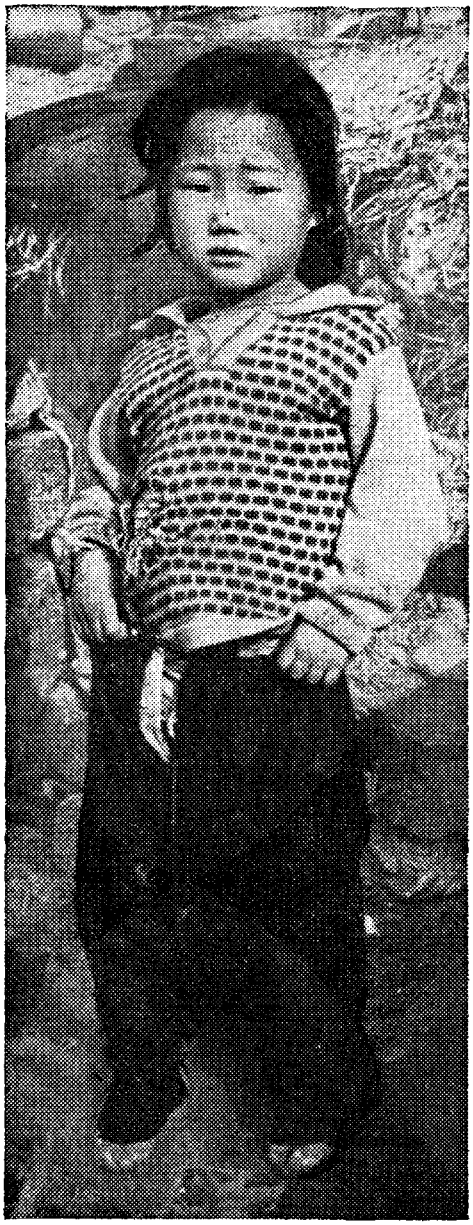

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